HIS MAIESTIES Most Gracious MESSAGE

MAY the 12. from HOLDENBY,

To the LORDS and COMMONS in the Parliament of ENGLAND, Assembled at WESTMINSTER,

And the Commissioners of the Parliament of SCOTLAND; With his Answer to the Propositions.

LONDON, Printed for RICH. ROYSTON. 1647.

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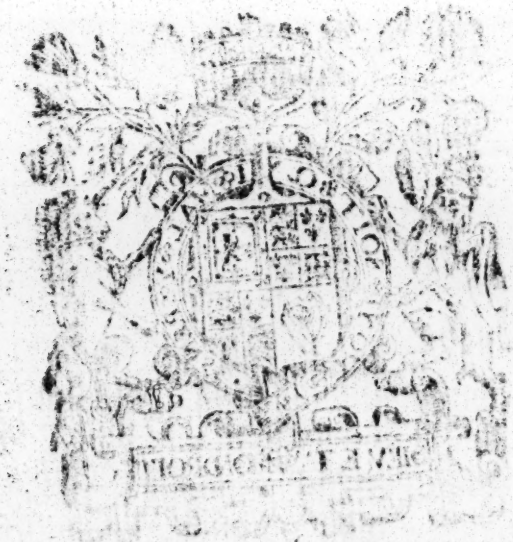

His Maiesties most gracious Message from Holdenby, *May* 12. 1647.

C. R.

AS the daily expectation of the comming of the Propositions hath made his Majesty this long time to forbear giving his Answer unto them, so the appearance of their sending being no more for any thing he can heare, then it was at his first comming hither, notwithstanding that the Earle of *Louderdale* hath been at *London* above these 10 dayes, (whose not comming was said to be the onely stop) hath caused his Majesty thus to anticipate their comming to him, and yet considering his Condition, that his Servants are denied accesse to him, all but very few, and those by appointment, not his owne Election, and that it is declared a crime for any but the Commissioners, or such who are particularly permited by them, to converse with his Majesty, or that any Letters should be given to, or received from him, may hee not truly say, that he is not in case fit to make Cõmissions, or give Answers, since he is not Master of those ordinary Actions which are the undoubted Rights of any free-borne man, how meane soever his birth be? And certainly hee would still be silent as to this subject, untill his Condition were much mended, did he not prefer such a right understanding betwixt Him and his Parliaments of both Kingdomes, which may make a firme and lasting Peace in all His Dominions, before any particular of his own or any earthly blessing, and therefore His Majesty hath diligently imployed his utmost indeavours for divers months past, so to

informe His Understanding, and satisfie His Conscience, that he might be able to give such Answers to the Propositions, as would be most agreeable to His Parliaments; but he ingeniously professes, that notwithstanding all the paines that He hath taken therein, the nature of some of them appeares such unto him, that without disclaiming that Person which God hath given him to judge by for the good of him and His People, and without putting the greatest violence upon His own Conscience, He cannot give His consent to all of them, yet His Majesty (that it may appeare to all the World how desirous He is to give full satisfaction) hath thought fit hereby to expresse His readinesse to grant what he may, and His willingnesse to receive from them, and that personally if His two Houses at *Westminster* shall approve thereof, such further Information in the rest as may best convince his judgment, and satisfie those doubts which are not yet cleer unto him, desiring them also to consider that if His Majesty intended to winde himself out of these troubles by indirect meanes, were it not easie for him now readily to consent to what hath or shalbe proposed unto him, and afterwards chuse his time to breake all, alledging, that forc't concessions are not to be kept, surely he might, and not incurre a hard censure from some indifferent men? But maximes in this kinde are not the guides of his Majesties actions, for he freely and cleerly avows, that he holds it unlawfull for any man, and most base in a King, to recede from his promises for having been obtained by force or under restraint; wherefore his Majesty not only rejecting those arts which he esteemes unworthy of him, but even passing by that which he might well insist upon as point of honour, in respect of his present condition, thus answers the first Proposition. That upon his Majesties comming to *London*, he will heartily joyne in all that shall concerne the honour of his two Kingdomes or the Assembly of the States of *Scotland*,

land, or of the Commiſſioners or Deputies of either Kingdome, particularly in thoſe things which are deſired in that Propoſition; upon confidence, that all of them reſpectively with the ſame tenderneſſe will looke upon thoſe things which concerne his Majeſties honour.

In anſwer to all the Propoſitions concerning Religion, His Majeſtie propoſeth, that he will confirme the *Presbyteriall* Government, the Aſſembly of Divines at *weſtminſter*, and the *Directorie*, for three yeares, being the time ſet downe by the two Houſes, ſo that His Majeſtie & His Houſehold be not hindred from that form of Gods Service which they formerly had: And alſo, that a free conſultation and debate be had with the Divines at *Weſtminſter* (twentie of his Majeſties nomination being added unto them) whereby it may be determined by his Majeſtie and the two Houſes, how the Church ſhall be governed after the ſaid three yeares, or ſooner, if differences may be agreed. Touching the Covenant, his Majeſty is not yet therein ſatisfied, and deſires to reſpite His particular Anſwer thereunto, untill His comming to *London*; becauſe it being a matter of Conſcience, he cannot give a reſolution therein, till he may be aſſiſted with the advice of ſome of his own Chaplains, which hath hitherto bin denyed Him, and ſuch other Divines as ſhalbe moſt proper to informe Him therein; and then He will make clearly appeare, both His zeale to the Proteſtant profeſſion, and the Union of thoſe two Kingdomes, which he conceives to be the main drift of this Covenant. To the 7 and 8 Propoſitions, his Majeſtie will conſent: To the 9 his Majeſtie doubts not but to give good ſatisfaction, when he ſhalbe particularly informed how the ſaid penalties ſhalbe levied and diſpoſed of. To the 10 his Majeſties Anſwer is, That he hath bin alwaies ready to prevent the practices of Papiſts, & therfore is content to paſſe an Act of Parliament for that purpoſe; and alſo, that the Lawes againſt them be duly executed. His

Majesty will give His consent to the Act for the due observation of the Lords Day, for the suppressing of Innovations, and those concerning the Preaching of Gods Word, and touching Non-Residence and Pluralities, and his Majestie will yeeld to such Act or Acts as shall be requisite to rayse moneys for the payment and satisfying all publique Debts, expecting also that his will be therein included. As to the Proposition touching the Militia, though his Majesty cannot consent unto it *in terminis* as it is proposed, because thereby he conceives, he wholly parts with the power of the Sword entrusted to him by God and the Laws of the Land for the protection and Government of his people, thereby at once divesting himself, and disinheriting his Posterity of that right and prerogative of the Crowne which is absolutely necessary to the Kingly Office, and so weaken Monarchy in this Kingdom, that little more then the name and shadow of it will remain: yet if it be only security for the preservation of the peace of the Kingdome, after the unhappy troubles, and the due performance of all the agreements which are now to be concluded (which is desired) which his Majesty alwayes understood to be the case, and hopes that herein he is not mistaken, his Majesty will give aboundant satisfaction, to which end he is willing by Act of Parliament, That the whole power of the Militia, both by Sea and Land for the space of tenne yeares bee in the hands of such persons as the two Houses shall nominate, giving them power during the said terme to change the said persons, and substitute others in their places at pleasure, and afterwards to return to the proper channell againe, as it was in the times of Queene *Elizabeth* and King *Iames* of blessed memory. And now his Majesty conjures his two Houses of Parliament, as they are Englishmen and lovers of Peace, by the duty they owe to His Majesty their King, and by the bowels of compassion they have to their fellow Subjects,

that

that they wil accept of this his Majesties offer, whereby the joyfull newes of Peace may be restored to this languishing Kingdome, his Majesty will grant the like to the Kingdome of *Scotland*, if it be desired, and to agree to all things that are propounded touching the conserving of peace betwixt the two Kingdomes.

Touching *Ireland*, other things being agreed, His Majestie will give satisfaction therein. As to the mutuall Declarations proposed to be established in both Kingdomes by Act of Parliament, And the Modifications, Qualifications, and Branches which follow in the Propositions, His Majestie onely professes, that He doth not sufficiently understand, nor is able to reconcile many things contained in them; but this He well knoweth, That a generall Act of Oblivion is the best Bond of Peace: and that after intestine Troubles, the wisdome of this and other Kingdomes hath usually and happily in all Ages granted generall Pardons, whereby the numerous discontentments of many Persons and Families, otherwise exposed to ruine, might not become Fuell to new Disorders, or Seedes to future Troubles. His Majestie therefore desires, that his two Houses of Parliament would seriously descend into these considerations, and likewise tenderly looke upon his Condition herein, and the perpetuall dishonour that must cleave to Him, if He shall thus abandon so many persons of Condition and Fortune, that have ingaged themselves with and for Him, out of a sense of Dutie, and propounds as a very acceptable testimonie of their affection to him, That a generall Act of Oblivion and free Pardon be forthwith passed by Act of Parliament. Touching the new great Seale, His Majestie is very willing to confirme both it and all the Acts done by vertue thereof untill this present time, so that it be not thereby pressed to make void those Acts of his, done by vertue of his great Seale, which in honour and justice he is obliged

liged to maintaine; And that the future Government thereof may be in His Majestie, according to the due course of Law, Concerning the Officers mentioned in the 19 Article, His Majestie when he shall come to *Westminster* will gratifie his Parliament all that possibly he may, without destroying the alterations which are necessarie for the Crown, His Majestie will willingly consent to the Act, for the confirmation of the Priviledges and Customes of the Citie of *London*, and all that is mentioned in the Propositions for their particular advantage. And now that his Majestie hath thus far indeavoured to comply with the desires of his two Houses of Parliament, to the end that this agreement may be firme and lasting, without the least face or question of restraint to blemish the same, his Majestie earnestly desires presently to be admitted to his Parliament at *Westminster*, with that Honour which is due to their Soveraigne, there solemnly to confirme the same, and legally to passe the Acts before mentioned, and to give and receive as well satisfaction in all the remaining particulars, as likewise such other pledges of mutuall love, trust, and confidence, as shall most concerne the good of him and his people: upon which happy agreement, his Majestie will dispatch his Directions to the Prince his Sonne, to returne immediately to him, and will undertake for his readie obedience thereunto.

For the Speaker of the Lords House (pro tempore) *to be communicated to the Lords and Commons in the Parliament of* England *at* Westminster, *and the Commissioners of the Parliament of* Scotland.

FINIS.